

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Town Hall Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on 9 May 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce and Bernie Rappensberger. Non-Councillor members Helen Johnson and Ben Porter (East Suffolk Council Officers)

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk), Kate Reeder (Town Hall Heritage Manager) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

Also in Attendance: Sheila Moss King (Project Manager)

96. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report was explained and the meeting was welcomed.

Jess Johnston was thanked for her presentation on the Town Hall Project at the Annual Assembly.

97. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

Cllr Patience was absent with no apologies received.

98. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

98.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from Councillors and members on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.

98.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

99. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 11 April 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval and requested a check on a possible typing error; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Sheila Moss King entered the chamber at 10:06

100. Public forum

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public – No advanced comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

Cllr Pearce requested a query he had for item 102.3 be taken in confidential session as it related to a proposed legal agreement between East Suffolk Council (ESC) and Lowestoft Town Council (LTC).

101. Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

101.1. To note and consider income and expenditure, including:

101.1a. To monitor the budget – The expenditure to date was £588,000 and the submitted claim to the heritage fund should see a repayment of over £200,000.

101.1b. To consider any payments for approval – The Design Team had suggested Hutton + Rostron, who completed the dry rot survey, be contracted again to provide an updated dry rot report. This would be approved under item 105.

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102. To consider a report from the Project Manager, including progress with the following:

- 102.1. Receive an update on the tender procurement process for the Main Building Contract and any actions required – Some aspects of this item regarding the tender needed to be discussed in confidential session. It had been agreed to delay the publication of the tender until 31st May as the team was not yet ready with a full bill of quantities and were reviewing design changes and integration work.
- 102.2. The boundary agreement and process of registering with the Land Registry – ESC have completed the valuation process and confirmed the value of the land was below the threshold that would have required further permissions. ESC's legal team would progress this further and a plan would be provided by the Design Team to confirm the land required. The UK Power Networks substation would be included in these plans to clarify its location as it crosses the boundary of one of the title deeds.
- 102.3. The siting of a compound on East Suffolk owned land at the rear of the Town Hall – An ESC officer was preparing the license to occupy for LTC and costs would be obtained from both ESC's and LTC's contractor to occupy the land. The Project Manager was due to meet with the Construction Design Manager to review site access.
- 102.4. The updated risk register – The updated risk register was issued and there were no queries.

The Project Manager would progress the recruitment of heritage trainee and informed the Committee of the Town Hall Heritage Manager and Heritage Project Manager's proposal to run an assessment centre, rather than an interview panel, with presentations, group work and exhibitions. Officers were asked to check the pension requirements for the trainees with the HR advisor.

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse this assessment programme and delegate its progression, implementation and decision on awarding the internships to the project team and officers; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

103. To consider a contract for the Contract Administration

Cllr Barker proposed this be considered further at the next meeting to review the legal advice that had been recently received; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

104. To note the revised quotation for indemnity insurance for the Town Hall

This item would be discussed in confidential session.

105. To receive a list of planned actions from the Project Manager to be authorised for progression

As discussed under item 101.1b, the Project Manager requested Hutton + Rostron be contracted to produce an updated dry rot survey, the cost of which should be under £10,000. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve this request with a delegation to the Project Manager to agree the price within the project budget; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

106. To receive an update on the Heads of Terms for the Registrars, including consideration of the rent appraisal (some aspects may be confidential)

This item would be discussed in confidential session.

107. To consider the merits of appointing a member of the public to this Committee

Cllr Brooks proposed this item be removed and not progressed; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

108. To consider any recommendations to Full Council

The Project Manager was asked to keep the Committee updated on any further time slippage

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with the project and the budget implications.

109. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 13th June 2024 – 10:00 – To be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting. As the Project Manager had notified the Committee that she would not be available for this date, Cllr Brooks proposed 5th June 10:00 be the next scheduled date for the Committee; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

110. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested save those deferred in the meeting.

111. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda:

111.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 10:53

102.1 Receive an update on the tender procurement process for the Main Building Contract and any actions required – Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

102.3 The siting of a compound on East Suffolk owned land at the rear of the Town Hall – A discussion took place surrounding the siting of the compound on East Suffolk owned land, and charges relating from East Suffolk Council. Cllr Pearce proposed the Acting Town Clerk speak with the Chief Executive Officer of ESC to establish ESC's view on this issue and express the concerns of this Committee; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

106. To receive an update on the Heads of Terms for the Registrars, including consideration of the rent appraisal (some aspects may be confidential)

Officers had provided the registrars a proposal and were awaiting their response.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:38

Signed:

5 June 2024